

# Community

(FORMERLY CATHOLIC INTERRACIALIST)

George Gregory, Jr. shows a model of Forest Houses to city leaders. The housing project is replacing slum buildings at rear.



(Photo, Cornell Capa)

## New York City's Pilot Project: Can a Community Desegregate Itself?

**TWO SETS OF STREETLIGHTS** stand in rows along 165th Street in the Bronx, New York City. The old ones are a sign of the past—the new, a symbol of hope and new life. They flood the area between two sections of the New York City Housing Authority's "Pilot Project," Forest Houses.

Begun in July, 1954, this partially-completed, low-income housing project now has 657 families, in an almost evenly divided interracial group. Its claim to attention lies in the fact that it is a test case. Forest Houses "Pilot Project" aims to desegregate an all-Negro community in the blocks between 156th and 170th Streets, and from Webster to Prospect Avenues.

### "Ghetto Areas Can Be Broken Down"

Back of this unique experiment is the vision of George Gregory, Jr., now a Civil Service Commissioner, and the first director of Forest Neighborhood House. Of him it has been said, "There are not many people who could have sold this idea to the city and the state, and to the surrounding largely Negro community as well." A dynamic, colorful, persuasive person, he has worked on the conviction

that ghetto areas can be broken down by working on the fringe of a Negro-white area.

### Groundwork—Getting Leaders

The groundwork of Forest Neighborhood House (the settlement house as distinct from Forest Houses, the housing development) and its work through active leaders over a period of nine years made the Pilot Project possible. Elizabeth Murrell, present executive director of the settlement house, programs the work of neighborhood committees in the larger area surrounding the new housing development. The Community Coordinator, appointed by Philip Cruise of the Housing Authority, selects tenants for the project and works as a liaison between the Authority and Forest Neighborhood House.

### Responsibility to Community

At Forest Houses, New York City's Housing Authority appears to realize its responsibility as a part of the community to which it is bringing public housing. The staff directing operations say they are "jubilant" about their op-

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## COMMUNITY



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## Wanted: More Complaints

Shortly before its Conference on Equal Job Opportunities, October 25, the President's Committee on Government Contracts reported that it had received 147 complaints in the two years of its existence. Seventy-nine of these are still undergoing action. No violation was found in 21; lack of jurisdiction resulted in the dismissal of 16. Thirteen were dismissed because of inadequate information. In the remaining 21, "corrective action" was taken.

The Conference, which brought together 65 leaders in business and industry, was held, Sec. of Labor Mitchell said, "To develop solutions (to discrimination) because this is in essence a management problem and it is in the last analysis up to the businessmen of the nation to solve it."

An estimated 85 to 90 per cent of American industry, employing some 50 million workers, does business with the Federal government. Since the non-discrimination clause applies to any industry doing business with the government, it is evident that the 147 complaints represent only a small fraction of the discriminatory incidents.

### Voluntary Basis

The present Committee, set up in August 1953, has a general educational program devoted to the elimination of employment bias, in addition to its handling of discrimination complaints. It pursued to a successful conclusion the case of Capital Transit Company of Washington, D.C., the largest private employer in the nation's capital.

Compliance with non-discrimination is sought on a voluntary basis. The Committee has no legal penalties which it can impose on violators, nor even can it go to the courts and seek injunctions to force compliance. A recalcitrant employer can, however, be made to feel the pressure of possible loss of contract or failure to renew it. A great deal depends on the extent to which the government agency doing the buying wants to pursue the matter.

In spite of a few noteworthy accomplishments, the majority of government contractors still discriminate. Most civil rights leaders feel and we would agree that a national Fair Employment

Practice Law is the thing to be desired. Yet, barring a drastic revision of the political forces in Congress, such passage seems impossible.

### Opportunity

The government contract clause can however be used to a great deal more advantage than it has thus far. And here is where individuals and groups working for justice have a great opportunity to act.

A complaint need not be filed by the aggrieved person, but may be filed by any individual or group with knowledge of the case. Of the 147 cases which have been filed, 98 of them were filed by 15 organizations. With the thousands of cases of discrimination in industry, and the many hundreds of religious, minority and labor groups interested in working against them, the matter of finding and filing complaints should not be a difficult one. The effect might be a significant change for the better in the nation's employment pattern, which still is a basically discriminatory one.

Complaints may be filed for any of the following reasons: discrimination because of race, religion, color or national origin; with regard to employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; selection for training, including apprenticeship, and failure to post notices in conspicuous places setting forth the provisions of the non-discrimination clause.

### Information Needed

The complaint should contain the following information:

(1) name and address of complainant; (2) name and address of employer; (3) brief statement of what part of the nondiscrimination clause is alleged to be violated; (4) specific evidence supporting the allegation, giving names of persons involved and date of any instances of discrimination. Also as detailed a description as possible of the circumstances of the case.

Complaints are to be sent to the President's Committee on Government Contracts, Washington 25, D.C.

—Tom Sues

## Advent

The campaigns for "Putting Christ back into Christmas," a worthwhile endeavor, have been reasonably successful in getting Christmas cribs displays in store windows and more cards with Christ-like messages on the sales counters. An even more basic task, it seems to us, is "Putting Advent back into our lives."

While we might question the methods of celebrating, no one of us would deny that Christmas is a big American holiday. But at the same time we'd have to admit that the mystery of Advent, the season of longing and happy preparation for the coming of the Prince of Peace, is frequently lost to us. Or dimmed in the din of too-early carols, the hustle of Christmas shopping, the rush of Christmas parties.

### Three-Fold Coming

The Church spends the time of Advent in solemn preparation for the three-fold coming of Christ.

Dom Gueranger gives us some fruitful thoughts for meditation, as we await with the Church the arrival of Christ. Of His first coming he says, "It is our duty to join with the Saints of the old Law in asking for the Messiah, and thus pay the debt which the whole human race owes to the divine mercy . . . notwithstanding His having saved the work of His hands, He (Christ) still wishes us to beseech Him to save us . . . the Church puts on our lips during these days of expectation the ardent supplications of the ancient Prophets; let us give our closest attention to the sentiments which they express."

The Church aspires also to the second coming, the consequences of the first, as she prays that Christ may visit her, in her hierarchy, her members, living and dead, and lastly in those who are not in communion with her. This coming is the coming of Christ in the

souls. The Church prayer tells us: let your heart, then be on the watch. It speaks of darkness, which only God can enlighten; of wounds, which only His mercy can heal; of a faintheartedness, which only God can brace.

But this second coming does not content the Church. She yearns after Christ's final coming as judge. She seems to say, let even those touched by the tidings of Christ's coming as the Babe in Bethlehem and in our souls, think during Advent on the awful and certain truth that Christ will come also not to save, but to judge. She warns us this will be a day of terror—Christ will judge all things with justice.

The Church uses purple vestments to signify the mourning in which we unite ourselves with the Israelites of old, who cloth in sack cloth and ashes, wait for the Messiah. They signify works of penance too, through which we prepare a place in our souls for Christ.

### Note of Joy

There is, however, a note of joy in Advent liturgy. The joyful Alleluia is not interrupted. There is Gaudete Sunday where rose-colored vestments are used and the organ is played. These vestiges of joy blended with the mournful tell us that though we unite with the ancient people in prayer for the Messiah, we do not forget that He has already come.

Advent is our tremendous opportunity to make ready our hearts and minds and wills for Christ. Christ reigns on earth through our hearts and minds and wills. An awesome thought, yet the basis of our apostolate. An Advent, lived in the Church's spirit of longing and preparation will bring Christ more fully into our lives. In addition it will hasten His coming to the world where Pius X told us—He needs to be restored.

—B. J. S.



(Morris de la Cerda)

*O Day-Spring, Brightness of the light everlasting, and Sun of Justice, come and enlighten them that sit in darkness.*

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# New York City's Pilot Project:

A white tenant puts it this way, "I think my children would miss a rich experience in their lives if they didn't live in Forest Houses."

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portunity. Their enthusiasm has caught on and the work of the "little people" resident in the area shows it.

## Likeness Not Difference

Among the residents of Forest Houses a big change is taking place. Negro, Puerto Rican, white and Oriental families are learning human likeness where before many of them saw only racial difference. One of the white tenants puts it this way, "I think my children would miss a rich experience in their lives if they didn't live in Forest Houses."

## How It Happened

The origins of this working arrangement give insight into how a set-up of this sort can come to be. "These things don't happen by themselves," notes the Community Coordinator. "If left with no direction, relocation of a project site results in the same population set-up racially as it was before the development. A dominantly Negro area tends to result in almost total Negro occupancy."

## Three Needs

Miss Murrell, in an interview, told us about desegregation of an area. She said, "(1) The community must want it. (2) There must be interested leadership. (3) There must be a staff to guide it through all phases. Otherwise there's a mechanical return to the original population."

Accomplishing these three aims has been the work of Forest Neighborhood House and of a group called Forest Neighborhood Committee for a Balanced Community. The committee is made up of some 200 neighborhood folks who have gotten an injection of the "philosophy of desegregation." Not big names—this is what is so thrilling to see them operate. There's the little lady who lives across the street, the PTA president from St. Anthony's, the lady whose children go to the school around the corner. Reverend Edler Hawkins, of St. Augustine's Presbyterian church, long term leader in the locality, makes an excellent chairman of the Planning Committee. (The Committee's area of coverage, mentioned earlier by streets, constitutes Morrisania Health District Number 35 which includes 70,000 people.)

## A Lot of Leg Work

"Where did you find the people to move into the new low-income city project?" is the question most asked of the Committee. The answer they give is, it wasn't easy. It took some thinking and a lot of leg-work, but results prove the trotting worthwhile.

Local volunteers and other city agencies were very responsive. Volunteers contacted some 280-300 organizations: Jewish, Protestant and Catholic religious leaders and their congregations, community and settlement houses, family help agencies, the Department of Welfare, women's clubs. Sometimes the contact meant new tenants. Usually it meant an understanding of the aims of the Pilot Project. It will probably mean future tenants for the entire set of four housing projects in the pilot plan of the next four years.

## Community Affair

Advertising locally was done through flyers, personal contact, and forums and exhibits in the schools. Public School 51 chose the whole program as a core study. Jane Addams Vocational High School held a public exhibit of photos

and drawings showing what the change meant to their families and their community. When the first seven apartment houses were finished, students from Jane Addams and Morris High Schools served coffee on the first floor of one of the houses to welcome the residents. Already it was a community affair.

## Integration Possible and Pleasant

When the next section of Forest Houses opens in spring 1956, Forest Neighborhood House will open a recreation center there. They will also maintain their present center at 1122 Forest Avenue. Thus they will continue the plan of Commissioner Gregory to see a "plotted poly-racial tenancy as a core self-transmitting center to desegregate the surrounding community."



(Photo—Courtesy Social Whirl)

George Gregory, Jr. talks with two residents of Forest Houses.

Miss Murrell and the committees working with her are happy about this. She remarked, "You could shut your eyes to the old situation. But everyone living in this area sees that Negro, white and Oriental people are living in the same community and are finding it not only possible, but pleasant." In the surrounding community desegregation has not been accomplished in a short one and one-half years; but much activity and change are reflected from Forest Houses to the neighboring blocks.

## This Is Your Life

A large stimulus came when Ralph Edwards brought George Gregory and four neighborhood families (one Negro, one Puerto Rican and two white) to his television program, *This Is Your Life*. The publicity was great. One of the white tenants, a Nurse's Aide at Fordham Hospital, found that her prestige at work mounted in direct contrast to the criticism she had gotten for going to live in Forest Houses. Another lady had an enthusiastic reaction. "Just think of it!" she said, "Besides taking us to Los Angeles, they paid my taxi-fare to the airport!"

## A Poor Man's Development

Such a "shot in the arm" is a grand boost, especially since there are many

difficulties peculiar to this situation. Miss Murrell, who was program director at Forest Neighborhood House prior to succeeding Mr. Gregory, analyzes them: "Forest Neighborhood House is a poor man's development. With no money, we've also had to encourage leadership and get across belief in desegregation. It's difficult for people who aren't poor, or Negro or Puerto Rican to realize the situation of those who are poor, or Negro or Puerto Rican."

## Troubled History

The history of the District Number 35 area has been a troubled one. For three or four generations a few prominent Negro families have lived there. The Episcopal Church at 156th Street has always been a "Negro" church. About

ing its purpose. They generously turned over the house to the community.

## A Framework Created

Complexity followed. The new institution became Forest Neighborhood House and the Negro community considered it its own. George Gregory, newly appointed director with experience at Harlem Boy's Club, saw immediately the need to convince Negro families that the House was for all people.

He emphasized their responsibility for accepting leadership and a part of the financial burden of the House. It was in this way that he started to develop local leadership about ten years ago. A framework was created through which the community cooperates in the Pilot Project.

## "We Are Proud of Our Neighborhood"

Changes in the area, with the demolition and the rebuilding, have alerted the community to work for improvement. They have produced social relations that, in the main, grow progressively better. The Committee for a Balanced Community (Forest Neighborhood Committee) works on health, education, rehabilitation, safety, housing and recreation in the total neighborhood. On each area, there is a subcommittee working.

The Committee has members from the Bronx Urban League, Morrisania Community Council, Morris High School, and the American Jewish Committee as well as from Forest Neighborhood House. They have circulated thousands of throw-aways that start, "How do you do, neighbor! . . . We are proud of our neighborhood and would welcome you to . . . Forest Houses." They work mainly, however, for the desegregation of houses in the surrounding community. Block associations with block captains and house captains try to improve the area by getting landlords to cooperate voluntarily with the Housing Code.

## Action on Community

The Health Committee, working in an area of top tuberculosis incidence, surveyed maternity and infant mortality. By appeal to the Department of Health, they have moved to an early priority the setting up of a district health center. It will be located at 169th and Fulton Streets.

"Action is woven into the warp and woof of community living," Miss Murrell comments. "The people make large use of letterwriting to officials. They think nothing of phoning the Commissioner of Education, asking him to attend a meeting they are holding to discuss school problems. And their methods work. He comes." Result so far: a Junior High School is built.

## "Go Thursday Morning"

The elementary schools have 2000 more pupils than they can adequately teach. An additional 600 or 700 will be coming next spring when the second part of Forest Houses opens. Schools are operating on double and triple sessions. What now? Mrs. Rasmus, Supervisor of the Nursery School and School Age Day-Care Center at Forest Neighborhood House, Miss Murrell and close to 70 parents attended a Board of Estimates hearing on school conditions.

The word went out, "Go Thursday morning at 10, bring your lunch and plan to keep going every day until we can get some good results." The results came. Approval of plans for a new elementary school has been gained.

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# Views

## Two Receive Justice Awards



(Photo—Courtesy Catholic Interracial Council)

Award-winner, Dr. James Hose

THE annual James J. Hoey Award for interracial justice was given this year to a Negro surgeon and a white editor from the South, who expressed regret that such an award should be needed in the U.S. at this time. The two honored were Dr. James Hose of

Memphis, founder of St. Roch's Clinic in that city; and Millard F. Everett of New Orleans, editor of *Catholic Action of the South*. In the opinion of this writer, this is the best Catholic newspaper in the South, particularly with regard to the race issue.

The honors were presented on behalf of the Catholic Interracial Council of New York by Auxiliary Bishop James H. Griffiths of New York.

Dr. Hose started medical practice in 1908. Barred because of color from his county medical society, he founded St. Roch's clinic to take care of Negro patients, one-third of whom are charity cases.

In 1927, Dr. Hose became a convert to the Catholic Church. Ten years later he helped found St. Augustine's Church in Memphis. He has also been instrumental in helping to expand hospital facilities for Negroes in that city.

Millard Everett's vigorous editorials for racial and social justice won him an honorable mention in the 1955 Heywood Brown Awards of the American Newspaper Guild. Mr. Everett has been in the field of Catholic journalism since 1929, working first with the *Denver Register* before moving on to his present position in 1949.

## Cadillacs but Not Houses

THE executive secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Charities charged recently that the Federal Housing Administration is making no effort to eliminate discrimination in public housing.

Msgr. John O'Grady, addressing a western regional meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Charities in Denver, said the Federal government's responsibility for housing discrimination is twofold: it lends its housing services to builders who discriminate against minorities, and it is destroying safeguards against discrimination within housing agencies.

Msgr. O'Grady pointed out that in many city areas "it is impossible for members of minority groups to buy houses."

"They may be college professors or millionaires," he said, "They can buy Cadillacs and clothing, eat in restaurants and live in hotels—but they can't buy houses."

"In spite of all the decisions of the Supreme Court against school transportation and employment segregations and restrictive covenants in building homes," he said, "we still have what amounts to restrictive covenants."

## Pilot Project:

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Soon, Forest Neighborhood House will have a center with recreation facilities and work with the handicapped within the project site. They are planning these programs now, at the same time carrying on at 1122 Forest Avenue. There is a settlement house, plus. About 500 people come daily for some kind of service. The Day Care Center, under the direction of Mrs. Rasmus, has a staff of 28 people, 11 of whom are teachers. 78 children attend the nursery school, and 50 are in the school age program. From a loosely woven schedule, good educational standards and a program of activities running from 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., have been developed.

### Interracial Emphasis

The emphasis is on the interracial angle in staff contacts with parents. The local community makes for a majority of Negro children in the Center. There will be larger diversity when children from Forest Houses also are accepted. "We have not integrated as much as we'd like to," says Mrs. Rasmus, "but we take children in terms of need. We can integrate the staff and have done so. Here is a demonstration that words alone could never make."

The Day Care Center is subsidized up to 86 per cent by the Department of Welfare. The parents pay 13 per cent and Forest Houses contributes one per cent of the cost.

The teen-agers have the Youth Board. Throughout all activities a major goal is integration learned by people working together.

### Attitude Changes

Miss Murrell, when asked whether she could recall an example of a change of attitude toward desegregation said: "It's hard to nail down something like that. There was a Negro resident, interested in the community, but violently opposed to Puerto Ricans coming in. Now he is working on all community levels, and actually urging that Puerto Ricans be given their proper position in the community."

As we talked, a young man came in to give Miss Murrell a bill. "Money doesn't frighten me," she told us. "It's just a matter of finding it." The house is partially dependent on donations for support.

### One Program Needs the Other

Forest Neighborhood House, in the vision of its Director, is a two-fold operation: (1) the settlement house program and (2) a community organization program. "No settlement house can survive inside itself," she says. "One program would not last without the other. The staff is miniature for the amount of work. Committees are kept going by local people." She did not point out the obvious fact that the community would not be aware of its need to desegregate for healthy survival without the Neighborhood House.

### Coordination—the Lever

The Pilot Project of the Housing Authority and the Forest Neighborhood House are interdependent. The Co-ordi-

## Haas Award Given Schermer

ANOTHER AWARD for Interracial Justice, the Bishop Haas Award, was given recently to Mr. George Schermer, director of the Philadelphia Commission on Community Relations. He formerly held a similar post in Detroit. Addressing the Philadelphia Catholic Interracial Council, where he received the award, Mr. Schermer laid part of the blame for the segregated pattern of housing in this country to the policies of the FHA and VA.

These policies are such, said Mr. Schermer, that Negro families are usually unable to get the low down pay-

ments and monthly payments, and longer term mortgages, which white families can get in the purchase of FHA and VA homes. As a result, there is developing a concentration of whites in the outlying areas and a concentration of Negroes in the cities. This trend is aggravated by the rapid migration of Negroes from the south to the north.

Mr. Schermer believes that to correct the situation the FHA and VA must not merely get builders to agree not to discriminate but must be obliged to endorse such agreements and to inspect their operations.

## Till Jury Refuses to Indict

PERHAPS the most dismaying news of the past month has been the refusal, on the part of the grand jury in LeFlore County, Mississippi, to indict two white men for the kidnapping of Emmett Till, brutally slain last September. A number of publications protested vigorously against what they considered to be a clear miscarriage of justice.

Fear is reportedly running high among Negro people who reside in the area of the Till slaying. An official of the Urban League in Chicago reported that since the slaying there had been a great influx of Negroes into Chicago from that region. Obviously these people are fearful of further unpunished violence.

## Refuse Extradition

THE NAACP asked Governor Harri-man of New York to refuse to return two fugitives to "the injustice and horrors of the chain gang," in the South. The two are Willie Morgan, who fled while serving time for theft in South Carolina, and Willie Reed, wanted in

Florida for assault and escape. At the organization's annual conference in New York, it was declared that "there has been a complete breakdown of law enforcement in the South as it applies to the rights of Negroes."

## Vatican Daily Scores Racism

THE viciously unChristian *Apartheid* policies of South Africa, continue to make the headlines. These policies were condemned by the official newspaper of the Vatican, *Osservatore Romano*. The newspaper termed "unjust and immoral" the South African government's projected reclassification of the country's "Coloreds" (people of mixed racial origin) and the government's immigration policy, which according to the account would restrict immigration to Protestant Germans and Scandinavians, and exclude Catholics.

The *Osservatore* article also asserted that the South African government . . .

"allegedly plans a law to establish birth-control clinics in Negro reservations." Declared the Vatican publication, "We are faced with a systematic contempt of the human person and with the oppression of innocent peoples. . . ."

Such a racial policy comes ever closer, said *Osservatore*, to Hitlerite racism, and cannot fail to produce reactions like the "Movement for the Union of Non-Europeans," which, "in a reverse sense has adopted the racism of nationalistic whites, and, guided by Communists, proclaims the need to expel 'intruders.'"

—Tom Suess

nator, whose work is so exploratory that it doesn't as yet have an official status at the Housing Authority, is sometimes asked, "Do you get paid for sitting in this park talking to me?" Most of her time is taken up talking to tenants and prospective tenants and in contacting agencies. Yet her work is the lever in the total job of integration in this neighborhood.

### What "Little People" Can Do

If the "Pilot Project" works, (and it seems to be doing well), it will show that a neighborhood can grow into a new spirit of acceptance of all people just as people. It will give a method for other communities for it shows what "little people" working with ordinary means and vision can do.

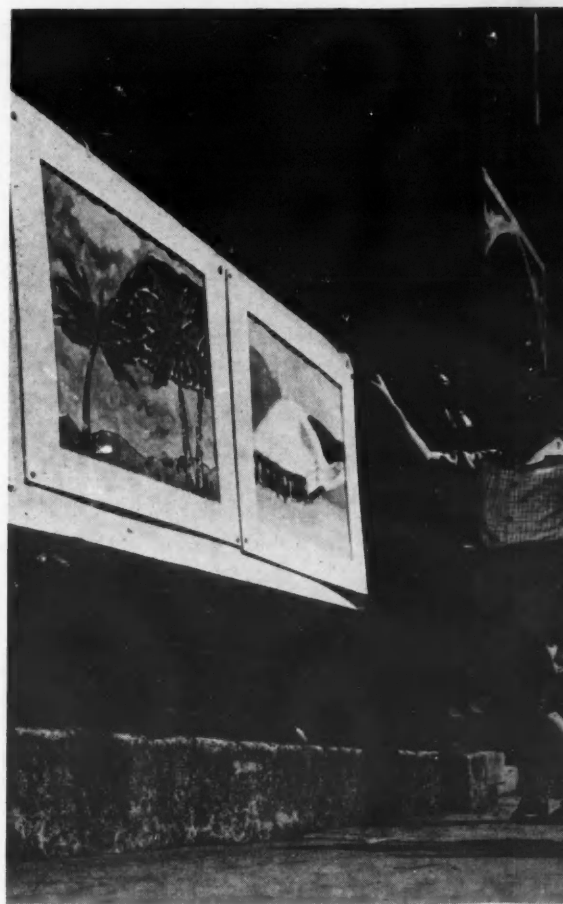
The plan won't be completed when Section 2 of Forest Houses opens next spring. Another project for 800 families (500 at \$10.50 per room and 300 at \$20 per room) is planned close by. This wider range of income will probably call for a widening of the community attitude.

### Time and Families Needed

The new section will be tenanted in what seems now a faraway four years. But the time is needed for social preparation as well as for the building of a good physical plant. And more families are needed, like many already there, who have consciously come to be a part of this social experiment.

—Mary Ryan Boyd.

The author, who is now married and living in New York City, is a former Friendship House staff worker and director.



Junior Art Critics view pictures at the Sidewalk Art House. This grass-roots art program



# Prelate Calls for End of Bias in Hospitals



(Photo—Courtesy New World)  
**Cardinal Stritch**

(Excerpts from a speech given by Samuel Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago, on October 25 to a hospital conference sponsored by the Catholic Interracial Council. Attending the conference were over 100 doctors and administrators from the 22 Catholic hospitals in the Chicago archdiocese.)

IF THERE IS ONE THING that is clear in Catholic doctrine, it is that there can be no distinction of color, no distinction of race or nationality.

St. Paul enunciated that principle in one of his epistles. That was the principle upon which the Apostles went forth to preach the Gospel. In fact, we find in the historical records of the infant church in centuries past, this prin-

ciple so clearly and so perfectly realized that it has been imbedded in the life of the Church, and the Church has never brought it before the world as a matter of controversy or a matter of discussion.

... Before God there is no distinction in color and race. And if before God there is no distinction in color and race, there can be in any right society no such distinction.

Now we know that we have passed through in this country a historical period that is no great honor to our country. We yielded to passion. We yielded to aberration, and we did an injustice for a long time in our country, an injustice which stands out in our history.

... It is a beautiful thing today that here in the United States we are honest enough to recognize mistakes, honest enough to forget the past in trying to remedy those mistakes.

... In doing this, difficulties are encountered. When we try to analyze these difficulties, we find that there are many factors, and some of the factors in themselves deserve consideration. But despite these difficulties, the principle stands clear.

... In the care of the sick, we of the United States have built up the greatest system of hospitals of all the world. ... Looking at these hospitals, (we see) that there are certain responsibilities which belong to the staff, and there are certain responsibilities which belong to the administration. But we will only get the proper solution of the question before us today when we have in our hospitals

the fullest and most complete and most unselfish cooperation between the staff and the hospital.

... I would say ... that a first point in today's conference should be the obligation of the staffs of our hospitals to admit qualified doctors without any respect to color, and to see that they receive opportunities for the experience and the training which they need to do their work as doctors in the community.

Maybe some people think I am wrong in overstressing this angle of what you are discussing today at this conference, but out of a lot of experience, I have come to the conclusion that this staff problem is the key to a right solution of our problem.

As far as the care of the sick in our hospitals, on what right principle can we base our decision? How can we kneel before our blessed Savior on the Cross with His arm outstretched for all, and limit our charity and our ministration to any particular group?

Charity embraces all, and where these ugly distinctions obtain, they have been justified on a number of grounds. They have been justified on the grounds that the hospital, a privately controlled hospital, has to have patients who are pay patients to enable it to do its charity, and it cannot so extend its charity that it will become impossible to do any charity.

... But with the progress which is being made in our times, that argument is getting less and less forceful. And courageous action will make that argument entirely ineffective and without

weight.

... It is not easy these days to conduct a hospital without large substance, because (the cost of) conducting a hospital is high. Administration costs have soared until today, we look at the per diem cost of even the most economically conducted hospital, where all the sacrifices of religion are made, and it makes us remember figures some years ago and stop and wonder. ...

That places a great responsibility upon the staff. It places a great responsibility upon those conducting the hospital. But there is a supernatural quality, and none of us have ever done a charity that hasn't brought us returns. While we stop sometimes and look at difficulties ... we actually prevent, by overstressing difficulties, right action.

... The private hospital doing a lot of charity has a certain difficulty put on it which the taxable hospital does not have. It must in the main find from its patients the money to do its charity. It cannot, therefore do an unlimited work of charity.

St. Ambrose says that charity also must be regulated by the virtue of fruits. But in the doing of everything, it can look at man just as God looks at man, and without making distinctions of any sort, even those distinctions which sometimes give an advantage to a certain group. The day is coming when it is just foolish for any hospital administrator or any hospital staff to think that they can dodge, they can escape the truth that came to us when Christ died on the Cross.

## Home for the Unwanted

The story of a German mother who has made a home for Negro children.

A FAMOUS, CENTURY-OLD CHILDREN'S BOOK, *Struwwelpeter*, describes the impression created by Mohr (Moor) when he appeared on the streets in Germany. This lone Negro was pursued by a growing swarm of curious, teasing boys. St. Nikolaus threatened to punish them by dipping

every boy in his great ink-pot. Since they did not listen, Nikolaus grabbed one after the other and dyed them black.

This folk story gives a picture of the attitude toward Negroes in Germany before 1945. Even when Germany still had her colonies, it was rare to see a colored person. A Negro in the street provoked curiosity from adults and open excitement from children. When an occasional Negro appeared in a circus, he astonished the children much as did the lion tamer's act.

### First Contact

I was 30 years old when I first saw a Negro. It was during the French occupation of the Alps. My children and I huddled in an old farm house, terrified by the shouting and gunfire outside.

Suddenly a huge black soldier pushed into the house. The children wept because they believed he was the devil in person. Raising my arms in surrender I said to him in French, "All doors are open."

I can never forget his clear voice, "Madame, la guerre est finie!" (The war is over!)

### "He Belonged To Us."

When we returned to our burned home in Frankfurt, we soon became accustomed to the smiling features of colored soldiers. I was deeply moved when I saw my first colored baby and thought, "Well, now Germany has her first colored child too." I understood that he would be a part of our nation. He belonged to us and would live with us. I knew we had to care for him, to cherish and protect him.

### Social Worker Silent

As a social worker, I met more and more of the children in the orphanages. Many were adopted by colored foster parents. Once I met a colored officer who had adopted his own son. The boy was chosen from all the children in the institution by the officer's wife who did

not know the relationship between him and her husband. She was convinced that she had discovered this sweet baby by herself. Of course the social worker who managed the adoption was silent too.

### Some Figures

In Germany there are 330,000 illegitimate children of occupation soldiers. Although less than eight per cent of these children are colored, the public bothers more about the eight per cent than the other 92 per cent.

As a member of the city-council, I know the exact figures for my city of Frankfurt. We have 600,000 inhabitants. From 1946-54 we had 1,356 occupation children, 142 of them colored. One hundred and four colored children are cared for by relatives. The remaining *Mischlinge*, (literally translated, half-breeds) as they are called officially, are in children's homes, and one third need public support.

### Wants a Dark Daddy

I am working in the special field of colored children. Together with seven white refugee children who lost their parents during the icy trek of the spring of 1945, four of the colored children live with my family.

We try to give them family life, "nest warmth" and security just like our own children. When these four came, they asked my husband, "If you are really

our father, will you beat the other children if they call us 'Negroes?'" On the other hand, one of them, little William, said, "I would like to have a quite dark daddy."

### Solutions Sought

The German administration has tried to promote adoption and emigration for these children. However the occupation forces have denied these plans, so we must realize that our country will have a race problem too.

### Living Together—Answer

Therefore a big new children's home exclusively for colored children has been built. I consider it the false way to solve the problem. In the long run, the children have to live among us. We must accustom ourselves as quickly as possible, not trying segregation or a ghetto, not waiting for help from outside.

Fortunately there no longer are discriminatory laws in our democracy. Our task is to realize that because God created both white and colored we must in the future live with our dark citizens. It will be a long time before this is accomplished.

—Charlotte Schiffler

We met Mrs. Schiffler several years ago when she visited FH. She was studying social work in this country under the auspices of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.



(Photo—Courtesy Forest Neighborhood House)

the Sidewalk Art Exhibit of Forest Neighborhood House. Its art program embraces 200 artists.

Mrs. Schiffler's family enjoys an outdoor meal.





# Profile: Elizabeth Teevan



Teevy, who performs culinary marvels at F.H., now has a better stove.

**D**ON'T WORRY," said Father Donnelly's concerned voice over the phone from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon. "But Teevy's had a fall and broken her wrist in two places and has a slight concussion. She is in God's hands, and she knows it. She's calm. But pray for her because she has to have her wrist set without an anesthetic because of her heart condition."

Our Teevy hurt and a thousand miles away! We certainly did pray. As soon as she could travel we brought her back to Portland Friendship House.

Teevy has been a mother to us Friendship House staffworkers, nourishing both body and soul, bringing us joy and encouragement and consolation for over 12 years. At her going-away party from our Chicago house, the theme was, "God has made a barren woman to dwell in a house, the joyful mother of children."

## Age Unknown

Not quite five feet tall, with a real Scotch accent and a gray bob, Elizabeth Teevan is somewhere between 21 (she votes) and 71 (she once denied vigorously that she was 71, and she's a truthful woman). She says, "You can't trust a woman who tells her age. If she'll tell that, she'll tell anything."

In 1940 she was one of the first full-time workers to come to Harlem Friendship House. She helped Catherine de Hueck by two-finger typing, working with children after a full day's work, cooking some when Catherine wasn't around.

In 1943 Ann Harrigan asked Teevy to come to Chicago Friendship House as house-mother. Teevy became a good neighbor to the mid-Southside. A personalist to the core, understanding and loving people, she supplied many needs.

To upset people she gave good Christian counsel concealed in an easy-to-take joke or story. She baby-sat for mothers of families and brought them what she could of food and clothing. To over-thirsty friends she fed black coffee until they were able to understand her good advice. They sensed her love for them and tried to help her.

Staffworkers made her their confidante, and she knew more than anyone what was going on in the house. But she is discreet and charitable always. Her letters, written in the fine script learned in Scotch schools, keep her in touch with former staffworkers and friends of the house.

## "Expansive" Cooking

Most obviously marvellous of Teevy's gifts is her ability to cook for five to 50 people on an almost non-existent budget—keeping cheerful and unflustered at the same time. Often she hasn't known whether five or 15 people would be sitting down to supper.

Maybe it is Blessed Martin de Porres who deserves the credit for Teevy's zeal for interracial justice, for she has great devotion to him. They are on very informal terms, and we often hear her admonishing him, "Now, Martin, get your skates on." Or it may be the Holy Souls in Purgatory. She offers for them all the burns and scalds she receives during preparation of meals.

Between skillful shopping and begging, Teevy is like the valiant woman in the Scriptures who "provides victuals for her maidens" (and hearty ones for men, too). Teevy's helpers are always well entertained with songs or stories as she bustles around the kitchen.

When people saw the old equipment with which she worked in Chicago and Portland, they provided her with a stove whose oven door really closed. In Chicago, the Mothers' Club bought a new refrigerator which is able to cope with all left-overs until they can be put in Friendship House soup.

## Charity on Two Continents

All her life Teevy has helped others. In Scotland she sold handwork and ran errands for the Good Shepherd nuns. She also collected shilling there for Father Drumgoole's newsboys' home in New York.

She helped many friends come to the United States. They lived with her till they got work and could go it alone. She helped them adjust to the strange ways of Americans. She ran a candy store on Long Island where all the neighborhood boys hung out. Teevy says the attraction was a slot machine and unprotected cigarettes, but we think it was Teevy's personality and kindness.

May God spare Teevy to Friendship House for many more happy years!

—Mabel Knight

Mabel Knight, former editor of COMMUNITY, is now director of Friendship House in Portland.

## Christmas Comes But Once a Year

Life at F.H. is, as Mark Twain says, "tough but interesting." These Christmas stories through the years illustrate our point.

### Portland

**I**N PORTLAND the Police Department's Sunshine Division serves as emergency provider and good-natured big brother to people there. So we called them to provide a policeman Santa Claus for our children's Christmas party.

About 60 children were on hand and about 10 girls and a teacher from Holy Child Academy which furnished toys, refreshments and game leadership for the party. Amateur entertainers performed but they were merely a prelude to the big attraction—Santa Claus.

We were delighted when a big, uniformed policeman strode in, with a revolver on his belt. Just the type for a husky young Santa Claus.

"Welcome, officer. You can change into your Santa suit in back of the clubroom."

"But I thought you had the Santa suit."

### A Santa But No Santa Suit

Catastrophe! It seemed that there was some misunderstanding about the word "uniform" in our phone call. We had envisioned a Santa suit while the police department saw a blue outfit, complete with gun.

Frantic activity and prayers to get a Santa suit in half an hour. A call to Holy Child Academy indicated a Santa suit at St. Rose's Industrial school. We called there.

"Sure, we have a Santa suit. We'll be glad to let you borrow it if you can get it back to us by tomorrow night."

Pete Loftus got a cab and dashed to St. Rose's. He opened the package there to see the suit. It was a woman's outfit. . . .

"Oh, yes, here's one for a man." Back dashed Pete to Friendship House.

Our big policeman unfolded the suit and regarded it thoughtfully. It was for a man about five feet, four inches. The

policeman was a six-footer, and so is Peter.

The Wonder Bread plant is in the next block. The officer knew a right-sized man who worked there. He commandeered him off the job, giving a great deal of scandal to people who saw the man leaving with his armed escort. Later a Wonder Bread employee dropped in to check the Santa story.

### Santa's Mission Completed

Right on the correct stroke of 4:15 I was relieved and delighted to see Santa walk in, escorted by Peter and the big policeman, all with broad grins on their faces. Only a couple of us behind the scenes knew how much right they had to grin. Blessed Martin and some of our other celestial and terrestrial friends had seen us through again.

—Mabel Knight

### Washington

**A**FTER having spent several Christmases at St. Peter Claver Center, I can still say that the first one was the most memorable. It was the Center's first Christmas, and mine, too.

By four o'clock Christmas Eve the last food basket was delivered and the last newly painted toy left for a waiting child. By this time everyone looked wilted. We all sat down under the Advent wreath, also looking wilted, and sipped hot strong tea.

Just as we were beginning to relax, the Advent wreath apparently decided its work, too, was done. It broke from its moorings and crashed down onto the teapot. As is often the case with very tired people, we laughed until we were weak.

"Well," someone finally said, "we'll have a quiet Christmas, anyway. A visiting volunteer had generously offered to treat the staff to a ham and egg breakfast after Mass. No one else was invited."

Then we got up and put our homemade crib in the window and cleared away debris. Next we had supper and

trimmed the tree. There was only time left to make ourselves presentable before setting out for Midnight Mass.

We went to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The Mass was hardly under way before our fatigue dropped from us, and we were filled with the joy and wonder of the first Christmas.

As we left church, we met a few volunteers. Our Christmas spirit now overflowing, we invited them along. Secretly we hoped the ham and eggs would hold out.

### Friends Drop In

Back at the Center someone put the tiny Christ Child figure in the crib while others set the table. Then something we had not foreseen began to happen. Friends and vols on their way home from the nearby parishes of St. Augustine's and St. Paul's passed the Center. Seeing the lights, they came in to say "Merry Christmas." What could we do but invite them to breakfast?

By the time we sat down to eat, there were at least 30 people present. Somehow the ham and eggs held out. It was not a quiet time. But it was a joyous time. Everyone laughed and talked and sang carols. It was the way Christmas should be. I shall never forget it.

And that is the way the tradition of having an open door every year for Christmas breakfast began at St. Peter Claver Center back in 1949.

### Chicago

"The oldest member of the household is supposed to read the prayer this week. Well . . . any volunteers?" We all shuffled and looked at our partner—the expression on our faces intended to convince all onlookers that we are a blushing eighteen ourselves. Delores finally admitted that she was 25, and the candles on the Advent wreath were lit and the prayer begun.

We really do love the ceremony of the Advent wreath, and we were happy that last year some of our neighbors came in and joined us, making wreaths for their own homes.

One of the most hectic and yet one of the nicest times around Friendship

House also happens at Christmas. It is the preparation of Christmas baskets. St. Scholastica's, De la Salle, and other high schools keep the canned goods supply growing by leaps and bounds the three weeks before Christmas.

### Operation Icebox

A few days before the baskets are actually prepared, perishable foods begin to arrive. That calls for "Operation Icebox." The radiator is turned off in an upstairs room, windows opened, and as the temperature drops below 32 degrees, eggs, butter, oranges, milk, chicken, etc., are stacked around the room. The actual night that the families come for their baskets always comes too soon.

Some high schools, such as St. George's and Trinity, took individual families, visited them to find out just what was wanted, and delivered the baskets themselves. This really seems like a better idea so this year we are going to work solely at establishing contact between those who want to share their Christmas and those who might not have much of a celebration for the feast otherwise. We have close to 200 requests for baskets, so if you know of anyone interested, ask them to call Friendship House here.

### Personalized Giving

It will take extra time for those interested in helping out, but it will also make it a more personal thing. We hope too that as these visits are made, some of the facts of what it means to live in a segregated neighborhood where housing conditions are often poor and rents often too high will become increasingly clear . . . that the pain of segregation and discrimination will become as real as the pain of hunger and poverty.

We may miss some of the excitement of "Operation Icebox" but this is a small matter compared to the effort to bring more understanding between people in a more direct way. We know, of course, that if any real understanding comes about it will be because Our Lord Himself has out of his goodness given it to people's hearts.

—Ann Stull

Ann Stull has been with FH in varied capacities, including director, for six years.



## Book Reviews

### Blues to Beethoven



(Davenport Messenger)

Contralto Marion Anderson

**FAMOUS NEGRO MUSIC MAKERS** by Langston Hughes. Dodd, Mead and Co., New York, 1955. 179 pp. \$3.75.

**T**HE SOCIOLOGICAL IMPACT of music has helped diminish the racial barriers of the world. As Langston Hughes puts it, "Music has been one of the great Negro cultural contributions" to America and to the whole of society.

#### Key Negro Artists

For *Famous Negro Music Makers* Mr. Hughes selected key Negro artists and shows their influence upon the field of modern music, especially popular American music. He does not pry too deeply into the personalities and personal lives of the individuals. He gives us a short background sketch of each artist and tells what he or she contributed, artistically in the world of music, and generally in the field of race relations.

Historically the book ranges from post-Civil War period to the present. In selecting these representative individuals, the author must have experienced some difficulty because of the vast numbers from which to choose. But I believe that he has presented us with a wide and varied selection.

One group includes artists and composers within the field of popular music, or music of the people. The second group is made up of artists and composers who pioneered in the more classical fields, such as opera and symphony. There is hardly a media that he has left untouched—radio, theatre, television and concert hall are all represented.

The artists range from the Fisk Jubi-

lee Singers who over 80 years ago gave the spirituals, or "slave music" to the world—to songstress Lena Horne, the first Negro woman to play a non-stereotyped role in the movies; from the world's greatest tap dance, Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, who made music with his feet—to Dean Dixon, who organized an interracial group of musicians into a chamber orchestra and who was also the first Negro to conduct the New York Philharmonic Symphony. Also included are key figures in the transition from the early ragtime to modern jazz like Jelly Roll Morton, famous early ragtime pianist, and the fabulous individual stylist, Louis Armstrong. There is a brief piece on Marion Anderson.

#### Blues Shouter Bessie Smith

"Queen of the Gospel Singers" Mahalia Jackson, who popularized a completely new type of religious singing, is compared with Bessie Smith, the Empress and greatest of the blues shouters. Both have the same type of voice and similar deliveries—the difference being that instead of singing blues, Mahalia sings gospel songs which are sung with "joy unto the Lord."

While Bessie Smith was great, she lived too soon, because the world did not become blues conscious until nearly two decades after the "roaring 20's" and early 30's. But she became a star attraction on the Negro vaudeville circuit. "Audiences wept, shouted, screamed, and cried at her song, the deep, earthy Southern blues out of their own hearts." Mahalia Jackson also gained prominence solely through singing to Negro congregations, but later sang and recorded for C.B.S.

#### Tantalizing Rhythm

Mr. Hughes gives some interesting definitions and analysis of different types of music throughout the book. His last section, "Famous Jazz Musicians," shows us how "the syncopated rhythms . . . of the early African slave . . . must have been unusually tantalizing and powerful because they are still echoing in the widely popular music of America today—jazz—a music that has gone around the world."

Although geared for the high school group, this book is readable on an adult level, and should not be restricted to juveniles.

—John Patrick Little

*John Little, a teacher, is associated with Blanchet House of Hospitality in Portland, Oregon, and with the Christian Family Movement.*

## Readers Write

Dear Editor: I agree with Henrietta Hronek and would like more Friendship House news!

MISS GERTRUDE HEALY  
Brooklyn, New York

Dear Editor: I do not agree that (promoting Christ-like relations between Negroes and whites is a vital apostolate), STOP sending me the paper. I throw it unread into the waste basket. I believe in better race relations; I believe religion must not be the basis for it!

MR. C. J.  
Evanston, Illinois

Dear Editor: I think that COMMUNITY has really come a long way in reaching people, and feel that it is more interesting to the average lay person. I notice that every once in a while you get a letter from people who wish it was the old general, friendly paper it used to be, filled with news of the people from FH. I feel those people are thinking about their own preferences rather than the needs of the average person.

MARY JOHNSON  
St. Paul, Minnesota

Dear Editor: I felt very guilty as I opened your welcome letter, realizing that I had not yet extended my congratulations to you on the fine format and appearance of your publication under the new name COMMUNITY.

We have sent out a number of copies to members of our Board and have received very favorable comments. All of them like the new appearance.

GEORGE K. HUNTON  
Catholic Interracial Council  
New York City

## A Family Prepares for Christmas

**A**FTER OUR FIRST GATHERING around the Advent light, and the singing of the first Advent hymn, an air of expectancy spreads over the family group . . . Mother appears with a bowl (with little pieces of paper) which she passes around. This time, the pieces of paper contain the names of members of the family and are neatly rolled up, because the drawing has to be done in great secrecy. The person whose name one draws is now in one's special care. From this day until Christmas, one has to do as many little favors for him or her as one can. One has to provide at least one surprise every single day—but without ever being found out. This creates a wonderful atmosphere of joyful suspense, kindness and thoughtfulness. Perhaps you will find that somebody has made your bed, or shined your shoes, or has informed you, in a disguised handwriting on a holy card, that "a rosary has been said for you today" or a number of sacrifices have been offered up. This new relationship is called "Christkindl" (Christ Child) in the old country, where children believe that the Christmas tree and the gifts

under it are brought down by the Christ Child himself.

The beautiful thing about this particular custom is that the relationship is a reciprocal one. The person whose name I have drawn and who is under my care becomes for me the helpless little Christ Child in the manger; and as I am performing these many little acts of love and consideration for someone in the family I am really doing them for the Infant of Bethlehem, according to the word, "And he that shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me." That is why this particular person turns into "my Christkindl." At the same time I am the Christkindl also for the one I am caring for, because I want to imitate the Holy Child and render all those little services in the same spirit as He did in that small house of Nazareth.

. . . It is a delightful custom, which creates much of the true Christmas spirit and ought to be spread far and wide.

Maria Augusta Trapp in *Around the Year with the Trapp Family*, Pantheon Press, 1955, 251 pp. \$3.95.

## Fear Builds a Wall



Jo Sinclair, the author

**THE CHANGELINGS** by Jo Sinclair. McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. New York, 1955. 323 pp. \$3.75.

**T**HE NEIGHBORHOOD had three empty flats and Negroes came to try to rent them. The families were afraid of the Schwartzes, the Black Ones, saw them as a threat to the neighborhood. "Go away," they said, "no rooms here." As the fear spread, some retreated before it, others faced it and got a clearer view of themselves and the world.

#### Fear and Ignorance

Miss Sinclair has revealed the basic cause of racial prejudice—fear based on ignorance. The people of the neighborhood took their fears and transferred them to the Negroes. As Jules says to his mother, "The Schwartzes—what are they? Just a name you gave to a lot of stuff you're afraid of. You gave it a name and then you were able to curse. Hate it. . . . The Schwartzes—they're a wall you made yourself."

Most of the people in the neighborhood were Jews who had had to leave their homes in Europe to begin again in America. They felt that the Negroes

were taking their homes away again. Ironically, they were blind to the fact that the Negroes' plight was worse than their own had been, that the Negroes were continuously dispossessed even in America. The situation was the same as that in almost any neighborhood; the special fears of the Jews merely intensified it.

#### To Replace Love With Hate

It was up to the changelings to replace love with hate, fear with courage. Twelve-year-old Judy Vincent talked tough, but loved mightily. She loved her little nephew Manny, and her sister Shirley, who was "as if dead" to the family because she had married a Gentile.

She loved Clara Jackson, the Negro girl who offered her friendship, in whom she saw a reflection of herself. She loved seventeen-year-old Jules, who, even as he was dying, opened for her a splendid vision of life. And finally, there was Dave, the boy she had grown up with, had led the gang with, until the time came for gangs to be laid aside. She and Dave and Clara were the changelings, who would discard their parents' prejudices and fears, because life could be so much freer and more beautiful without them.

#### Genuine, Humorous, Moving

This is a novel rich and vibrant with life, authentic in atmosphere, with finely drawn characters. It is sometimes funny, more often deeply moving. The intimate picture of the Jewish milieu, with its observance of ancient customs and holidays, is fascinating. The tragedy of the Negroes' search for a home is brought out indirectly, by understatement that is twice as effective as a fuller statement would be.

Miss Sinclair has done a very difficult thing, explored a social problem without tampering with the aesthetic value of a fine novel.

—Eileen O'Hara Lexau

*Mrs. Lexau, a free lance writer, was previously on the editorial staff of the Catholic Digest.*

## Bias Seen in Armed Forces

**F**EAR that segregation may be returning to the armed forces was expressed by Rep. Powell of New York after a seven-week tour of military installations abroad. Powell said his conclusions are based on talks with men at Air Force and Army stations in North Africa, Spain, England and elsewhere.

He said the talks added to his belief that roadblocks to integration "have been thrown up somewhere in the Pentagon."

Added Congressman Powell, "Integration stops at the master-sergeant level."

—Tom Suess



# Helping a City Choose Integration

**FOUR YEARS AGO** almost to the month, two women set up shop in Washington. They had an office, a secretary, a telephone, a typewriter and a mimeograph machine. Their job: "See what you can do about segregation in the nation's capital."

A tall order? They thought so too, but this Fall their office quietly closed in the conviction that its particular function had been fulfilled.

## Startling Changes

"Startling to even the most optimistic" have been the changes in racial practices in Washington between 1951 and 1955, according to Irene Osborne, Washington representative of the Community Relations program of the American Friends Service Committee.

Her October (1955) report, "Toward the Elimination of Segregation in the Nation's Capital," closes out the four-year American Friends project, which focused primarily on the public schools and recreation areas.

## A Dramatic Account

The 40-page mimeographed document is a forthright, dramatic account of the remarkable service performed by two persons—the other was Alma Scurlock—not only in surveying segregation evils in the light of Christian principles, but in practical leadership of corrective measures.

"Basic to all other forms of segregation was the absolutely dual school system," Miss Osborne and her associate found.

And her observations contradict those who argue that tolerance and integration "cannot be legislated." She found that segregation was grounded on bad laws, and that successful desegregation came after the Supreme Court either supported good law (as in the Thompson Restaurant case) or upset unconstitutional ones.

## Behind Closed Doors

School officials in the beginning refused even to discuss desegregation because of its supposed foundation in law. Then, from 1952 to 1954, as the Supreme Court considered the school cases, the

School Superintendent and Board of Education blew hot and cold—now sponsoring public discussion of possible desegregation plans, then calling a halt to studies, later resuming talks on desegregation planning behind closed doors.

The situation in the public recreation system was somewhat better, the Recreation Board having in 1949 adopted an official policy for gradual desegregation of its playgrounds. But in the first three years under the "gradual" policy only 30 out of 140 areas had been opened for interracial use.

## Playgrounds Drop Color Bias

Then came the Supreme Court's school decision on May 17, 1954, blasting the "separate but equal" fallacy. The very next day, the Recreation Board of the District of Columbia "met in emergency session and declared that all its facilities would henceforth be open to all without regard to race. Later they took steps to integrate staff and to insure non-discriminatory hiring and placing. There has been no further racial issue on the playgrounds."

It took the Board of Education eight days to issue a statement, but it was a "forthright policy statement." The air during that summer of 1954 was filled with debate, but when school opened in September, 122 of Washington's 156 public schools had mixed student bodies for the first time. There were 38 integrated faculties; overcrowding in the Negro schools had been relieved; all new pupils entered schools according to the new geographical zoning map.

## All D.C. Schools Integrate

This September, all of Washington's more than 100,000 public school boys and girls were free to attend school on the new non-racial boundary system—and all new pupils must adhere to that system.

A perfect system? Of course not. Accomplished without incident? Not quite—but compared to the dire predictions of "viewers with alarm," the success of Washington desegregation has been almost phenomenal, from the time of the first "big break" in the pattern of prejudice, when the Supreme Court in

June, 1953, ruled on the Thompson Restaurant case. Washington restaurants literally overnight were open to all without discrimination, and soon movie houses and many hotels were also open to Negroes.

Miss Osborne mentions the peculiarities of the Washington community—particularly the District's votelessness, with a resultant lack of leadership and responsibility. Yet she says that they found in it "so much of the stuff of which any American city is made."

## How Was It Done?

Given the fertile field for such a project as theirs, and given the two staff workers' complementary talents (one had a background of sociology and education, the other of social work and community organization) the question remains: How did they "do something about segregation"? For they certainly did just that—included in this report is a list of seven of their publications and reports, a whole roster of consultations which they have provided, and there are indications of other materials which are and will be available to communities and organizations faced with desegregation or integration.

Almost two-thirds of the booklet are devoted to "How We Worked" and "The Program in Operation."

Certainly there is no intention of overcrediting a two-woman committee with having eliminated Washington's segregation problems—but it would be hard to find a group with as clear a presentation humbly submitted, of what they did and why.

## "The Work of Convincement"

Defining broadly the Service Committee's work in community relations as "the work of convincement," Miss Osborne includes in that concept "the total process of establishing contact and communicating meaningfully, with discussion leading to action."

When they began work in Washington, she says wryly, "The right people did not meet. If they did meet, they failed to share their thought; if they did share, they had difficulty in acting on the thought."

Among their first activities were the assembling of an Advisory Committee for their own benefit and the creation of a Joint Committee on Education composed of members of other race relations groups who continued to work through their own organizations, but who met to exchange information and ideas and plan jointly. The two Quaker representatives also built up working relationships with persons in the schools and the press and with other community leaders.

## The Delicate Problems

The statement on philosophy and problems (principle and strategy, rather) touches the delicate practical problems which arise when you try to put an idealistic program into action. To give but one example: "It was all too easy to have endless conversations with innumerable people about how to solve this or that problem of school housing or teacher shortage in the Negro schools. It was more difficult to find creative ways to convince people of the importance of integration."

Among the services of the operating program which evolved were:

A regular newsletter on local school problems and desegregation in Washington and throughout the country:

## Service to Local Groups

Assistance to local organizations—"In response to . . . requests, staff members gave information, advised on programs, found speakers, offered counsel, and acted as trouble-shooters."

Research on teacher integration in cities throughout the country;

Seminars for teachers, for members of Boards of Education and Recreation and of private agencies, and for high school students;

Publications, reports, consultant service.

As desegregation began in Washington last year, the Friends' project committee kept an eye on developments.

## School Standards Lowered?

"A new set of questions was being raised," Miss Osborne found. "Is integration lowering school standards? We find no such danger. Schools are developing improved programs to meet varied needs."

"Is integration creating problems?" Integration has solved the most severe school problems: through better use of its facilities, the school system can now do a better job of meeting problems as they arise.

## White Families Moving Out?

"Are white families moving out of the District because of integration?" Movement to the suburbs has been going on for many years; this year's changes occurred in areas of the city where the white population was already rapidly decreasing, showing continuation of a long-time trend."

Looking back on her four years' service as a trouble-shooter in a troubled area, Miss Osborne concludes that at one time "those who worked for integration were few in number and, seemingly, weak in power; now the city's officials and many specialized services and efforts are devoted to the job of completing the task."

## Segregation—A Moral Problem

And speaking as a religious worker she says: "We found . . . that it was of the utmost importance that the case against segregation should be posed in moral terms. There is usually no lack of those who will oppose segregation as uneconomical, wasteful, inefficient, and educationally unsound. It is too seldom said that segregation is wrong, doing harm to those who segregate as well as to those who are segregated."

—Kathleen Carmody

Mrs. Carmody, a volunteer at St. Peter Claver Center, writes for *The Catholic Standard*.



Washington,  
D.C. teacher  
and children  
at morning  
prayers.

The Message Magazine)